

TOPIC: RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE WITH DESIGNATION IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE AT AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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I. SUMMARY

This item recommends approval for Aims Community College to offer an associate's degree with designation in Criminal Justice.

II. BACKGROUND

Associate "degrees with designation" (also known as DwD's) are liberal arts and sciences associate degrees that have a designation in a particular discipline and go along with a Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreement. Pursuant to §23-1-108(7), C.R.S., the Commission has authority to establish and enforce "statewide degree transfer agreements" between two-year and four-year state institutions of higher education. Besides the current fifteen agreements, there are thirteen more in development and three others currently being offered but that have different requirements and were developed prior to the latest statutory definition (Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education and Engineering). It should be noted that §23-1-108(7)(c)(I), C.R.S., requires at least fourteen of these agreements by 2016 and that the Commission has exceeded the statutory requirement.

The Statewide Transfer Articulation Agreement for Criminal Justice was approved by the Commission at its January 22, 2013 meeting. The resulting associate's degree with designation in Criminal Justice is currently being offered by the Colorado Community College System campuses and Colorado Mountain College. The associate's degree is accepted in transfer by four-year institutions that offer bachelor's degrees in Criminal Justice. Aims Community College would also like to participate. Pursuant to §23-71-123, C.R.S., Aims Community College may offer a two-year degree program with or without academic designation after it has been approved by its Board of Trustees and by the Commission.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

Aims Community College's Board of Trustees approved the associate's degree with designation in Criminal Justice at its March 5, 2014 meeting. Colorado Revised Statute §23-71-123 gives Aims Community College statutory authority to offer the degree program after approval by the Commission.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Commission approve Aims Community College to offer an associate's degree with designation in Criminal Justice.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §23-71-123. Duties of board of trustees - degrees

(3) A junior college may offer a two-year degree program with or without academic designation. Before a junior college offers a two-year degree program with academic designation, as authorized by this subsection (3), the junior college shall determine the program designation for the degree. The junior college shall then submit the degree program designation to the board of trustees for its review and approval. The junior college may offer the degree program only after it has been approved by the board of trustees and by the Colorado commission on higher education. The junior college shall exclusively use the degree program designation name in official publications, course catalogs, diplomas, and official transcripts.

C.R.S. §23-1-108. Duties and powers of the commission with regard to systemwide planning

(7) (a) The commission shall establish, after consultation with the governing boards of institutions, and enforce statewide degree transfer agreements between two-year and four-year state institutions of higher education and among four-year state institutions of higher education. Governing boards and state institutions of higher education shall implement the statewide degree transfer agreements and the commission policies relating to the statewide degree transfer agreements. The statewide degree transfer agreements shall include provisions under which state institutions of higher education shall accept all credit hours of acceptable course work for automatic transfer from an associate of arts or associate of science degree program in another state institution of higher education in Colorado. The commission shall have final authority in resolving transfer disputes.

(b) (I) A student who completes an associate of arts or associate of science degree that is the subject of a statewide degree transfer agreement and who transfers from the state institution of higher education that awarded the degree to a four-year state institution of higher education shall, if admitted, be enrolled with junior status. Successful completion of an associate of arts or associate of science degree does not guarantee the degree holder admission to a four-year state institution of higher education.

(II) A state institution of higher education that admits as a junior a student who holds an associate of arts degree or associate of science degree that is the subject of a statewide degree transfer agreement may not require the student to complete any additional credit hours of lower-division general education courses; except that the institution may require the student to complete additional lower-division general education courses if necessary for preparation in the degree program in which the student enrolls so long as the additional courses are consistent with published degree program requirements for native students and do not extend the time to degree

completion beyond that required for native students in the same degree program.

(c) (I) Beginning July 1, 2010, the commission, in collaboration with the governing boards and the council convened pursuant to section 23-1-108.5 (3) (a), shall negotiate statewide degree transfer agreements and shall ensure that there are at least four statewide degree transfer agreements in place no later than July 1, 2012, and that, by no later than July 1, 2016, there are a total of at least fourteen statewide degree transfer agreements.